

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HILDA L. SOLIS

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Aligning the Public Health Response with Governor Newsom’s Strike Team to Ensure Compliance with COVID-19 Safety Measures

Employers are faced with significant challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, ensuring the health and safety of employees remains paramount to Los Angeles County’s economy, and, more importantly, public health. However, there continues to be significant workplace outbreaks that require immediate attention and action. In some instances, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health has required businesses to close to address mitigation efforts that need to be in place. These outbreaks are a result of the failure to comply with strict safety measures and infection control protocols as ordered by the Health Officer Order. Full compliance is necessary for the safety of workers and consumers, as well as the health of Los Angeles County’s economy. The consequences of noncompliant businesses are becoming clear as the County’s COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations continue to spike. It is critical that government agencies ensure business compliance for the safety of all County residents.

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The recent situation at Los Angeles Apparel, a garment company, exemplified significant issues. Tragically, the lack of adherence to Los Angeles County Health Orders resulted in 300 confirmed cases of COVID-19 among its workers and, even more tragically, four deaths. The company did not have the necessary protocols in place. Instead, workers used cardboards as a rudimentary barrier between their workstations, lacked the ability to practice physical distancing, and lacked the necessary training and information to ensure their safety.

It is these scenarios that require a multi-faceted response. That is why there is a need to enhance alignment with various enforcement agencies in response to COVID-19. To that end, Governor Gavin Newsom announced the creation of a strike team comprised of state agencies to enforce guidelines and rules to slow the spread of COVID-19. The strike team includes personnel from various state agencies. The state agencies are the California Highway Patrol, the Division of Occupational Safety and Health, Alcohol Beverage Control, Barbering & Cosmetology, Business Oversight, Consumer Affairs, Food and Agriculture, the Labor Commissioner's Office, and the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development.

The Governor's strike team presents an opportunity for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health to ensure a coordinated response – one in which we address not only the public health issues but also the occupational safety concerns as well as the need to ensure employees are receiving the wages they are entitled to receive, including when they are on COVID-19 related leave.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Department of Public Health in coordination with Office of Emergency Management and relevant

stakeholders, including labor unions and businesses, to develop a coordinated response strategy for Los Angeles County cities and unincorporated areas under the purview of the Department of Public Health that includes Governor Newsom's strike team to enforce the County Health Officer Order and applicable protocols to slow the spread of COVID-19 and report back with this strategy in no later than fourteen (14) days.

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